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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL RIGHTS
Twentieth session
Geneva, 26 April - 14 May 1999

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The twentieth session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, established in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1985/17, will be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 26 April to 14 May 1999. The first meeting will be convened on Monday, 26 April 1999, at 10.30 a.m.

2. The attached provisional agenda and annotations for the twentieth session of the Committee have been prepared by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 4 of the rules of procedure of the Committee.

3. The attention of the States parties is drawn, in particular, to the annotations to item 8 containing the list of reports that will be before the Committee at its twentieth session.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the session.

2. Election of officers.

3. Adoption of the agenda.

4. Organization of work.

5. Relations with United Nations organs and other treaty bodies.

6. Follow-up to the consideration of reports under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.

7. Substantive issues arising in the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

8. Consideration of reports:

   (a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.

   (b) Reports submitted by specialized agencies in accordance with article 18 of the Covenant.

9. Day of general discussion: "Right to education (articles 13 and 14 of the Covenant)": Adoption of general comments on "Plan of action for primary education (article 14 of the Covenant)" and "Right to education (article 13 of the Covenant)".

10. Formulation of suggestions and recommendations of a general nature based on the consideration of reports submitted by States parties to the Covenant and by the specialized agencies.

11. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.

ANNOTATIONS

1. Opening of the session

The twentieth session of the Committee will be opened by the representative of the Secretary-General who will preside over the meeting until the election of the Chairperson of the Committee.

2. Election of officers

In accordance with rule 14 of its rules of procedure, the Committee shall elect from among its members a Chairperson, three Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur, with due regard for equitable geographical representation.

3. Adoption of the agenda

Under rule 5 of the rules of procedure, the first item on the provisional agenda of any session shall be the adoption of the agenda, except for the election of its officers when required under rule 14. In accordance with rule 6 the Committee, during a session, may revise the agenda and may, as appropriate, add, delete or defer items.

4. Organization of work

In accordance with rule 8 of its rules of procedure, at the beginning of each session, the Committee shall consider appropriate organizational matters, including the schedule of its meetings. In this connection, the attention of the members of the Committee is drawn to the draft programme of work for the session, prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee and in accordance with established practice (E/C.12/1999/L.1).

5. Relations with United Nations organs and other treaty bodies

The Committee decided at its sixth session to nominate individual members to follow the work of each of the other treaty bodies. Such members are to follow as closely as possible the work of the relevant committees, to liaise where possible with members of these committees and to present an oral report on developments of both a procedural and substantive nature in their work which appeared to be of specific relevance to the work of the Committee (E/1992/23, paras. 371-373).

6. Follow-up to the consideration of reports under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

At its fourteenth session, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, recognizing the importance of periodically reviewing the implementation by States parties of its suggestions and recommendations, requested the Secretariat to submit to it, as from the fifteenth session, a document indicating all cases where a follow-up had been suggested by the Committee. In this connection, the attention of the members of the Committee is drawn to document E/C.12/1999/3 which contains the requested information.

7. Substantive issues arising in the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The Committee decided at its fourteenth session (28 April-17 May 1996) that as from its fifteenth session its discussions relating to the implementation of the Covenant (NGO hearings, methods of work, etc.) would be conducted under this agenda item.

8. Consideration of reports

(a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

In accordance with rule 61, paragraph 2, of its rules of procedure, the Committee shall normally consider the reports submitted by States parties under article 16 of the Covenant in the order in which they have been received by the Secretary-General. Representatives of the reporting States are entitled to be present at the meetings of the Committee when their reports are examined; such representatives should be able to make statements on the reports submitted by their Governments and reply to questions which may be put to them by the members of the Committee.

At its nineteenth session, the Committee requested the Secretary-General to schedule five reports from five States parties for consideration at its twentieth session. The Committee also decided to conduct at its twentieth session a review of the implementation of the provisions of the Covenant in Solomon Islands, which has not submitted any report since ratifying the Covenant in 1982, on the basis of any information that may be available to it.

In accordance with rule 62, paragraph 2, of the Committee's rules of procedure, the Secretary-General has informed the States parties concerned of the opening date and duration of the twentieth session of the Committee as well as of the dates at which their respective reports will be examined and has invited them to send representatives to attend the meetings of the Committee.

As at 15 January 1999, the reports listed below had been received by the Secretary-General. The reports of the States parties which are scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its twentieth session are identified by an asterisk. The tentative timetable for consideration of those reports, prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee, is contained in document E/C.12/1999/L.1.

Initial reports concerning articles 1 to 15 of the Covenant

Ireland*	E/1990/5/Add.34
Cameroon	E/1990/5/Add.35
Armenia	E/1990/5/Add.36
Georgia	E/1990/5/Add.37
Egypt	E/1990/5/Add.38
Honduras	E/1990/5/Add.40
Sudan	E/1990/5/Add.41
Kyrgyzstan	E/1990/5/Add.42

Second periodic reports concerning articles 1 to 15 of the Covenant

Tunisia*	E/1990/6/Add.14
Iceland*	E/1990/6/Add.15
Argentina	E/1990/6/Add.16
Jordan	E/1990/6/Add.17
Belgium	E/1990/6/Add.18
Venezuela	E/1990/6/Add.19
Morocco	E/1990/6/Add.20
Japan	E/1990/6/Add.21
Yugoslavia	E/1990/6/Add.22

Third periodic reports concerning articles 1 to 15 of the Covenant

Denmark*	E/1994/104/Add.15
Bulgaria*	E/1994/104/Add.16
Mexico	E/1994/104/Add.18
Italy	E/1994/104/Add.19
Portugal	E/1994/104/Add.20
Mongolia	E/1994/104/Add.21
Australia	E/1994/104/Add.22

(b) Reports submitted by specialized agencies in accordance with article 18 of the Covenant

In accordance with rule 67 of its rules of procedure, the Committee is entrusted with the task of considering the reports submitted by specialized agencies pursuant to article 18 of the Covenant.

In accordance with rule 68 of the rules of procedure, the representatives of the specialized agencies concerned may make statements on matters falling within the scope of the activities of their respective organization in the course of the discussion by the Committee of the report of each State party to the Covenant. The representatives of the States parties presenting reports to the Committee shall be free to respond to, or take into account, the statements made by the specialized agencies. The Secretary-General has invited the following specialized agencies, United Nations organs and financial institutions to send representatives to attend the meetings of the Committee: International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/Aids (UNAIDS), International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Any report which may be received from the specialized agencies under article 18 of the Covenant will be made available to the Committee in due course.

9. Day of general discussion: "Right to education (articles 13 and 14 of the Covenant)": Adoption of general comments on "Plan of action for primary education (article 14 of the Covenant)" and "Right to education (article 13 of the Covenant)"

In accordance with the decision taken at its eighteenth session, the Committee held its day of general discussion on the right to education as enshrined in articles 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on 30 November 1998 (nineteenth session). Particular effort was made to relate the discussion to the work of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, who participated in the discussion.

At its twentieth session, the Committee will devote its day of general discussion to the consideration of draft general comments on the right to education: "Plan of action for primary education (article 14 of the Covenant)" and "Right to education (article 13 of the Covenant)".

10. Formulation of suggestions and recommendations of a general nature based on the consideration of reports submitted by States parties to the Covenant and by the specialized agencies

Pursuant to rule 64 of its rules of procedure, the Committee may wish to make suggestions and recommendations of a general nature on the basis of its consideration of reports submitted by States parties and the reports submitted by specialized agencies, in order to assist the Council to fulfil, in particular, its responsibilities under articles 21 and 22 of the Covenant. The Committee may also wish to make suggestions for consideration by the Council with reference to articles 19, 22 and 23 of the Covenant.

11. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

In accordance with rule 59, paragraph 1, of its rules of procedure, the Committee shall at each session consider the status of submission of reports under article 16 of the Covenant and may make appropriate recommendations to the Council, including recommendations to the effect that the Secretary-General should send reminders to States parties from which reports have not been received.

The Committee will have before it under this item the following document:

A note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Covenant and the status of submission of reports (E/C.12/1999/2).

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